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Summer Conservation Conference at MSU

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FOR RELEASE THURSDAY, MARCH 16

Up to 500 conservation educators from the United States and Canada will meet at Montana State University from August 13 through 16 for a conference aimed at enlisting public support for conservation programs. National, state and private groups from across the continent will work together in the four-part conference program, according to Dr. James W. Gebhart, director of the MSU Conservation Laboratory and general chairman of the conference.

George Fersh, director of the Conservation and Resource-Use Education Project and associate director of the Joint Council on Economic Education, is organizing the program, Dr. Gebhart said. The Conservation Education Association is sponsoring the conference.

Association President Charles Mattison reports that the conservation educators will conduct a conference clinic to evaluate current conservation education programs. They will air vital information from public, private and collegiate groups in order to broaden understanding. They will work for greater coordination among all groups in personnel, materials and programs. They will also try to lay a foundation for improving the training of professionals in natural resources fields so these technicians will be able to give added help in harnessing public support.

Major conference sessions will be devoted to national, state, private and collegiate programs, according to Mattison. Invited to take part in discussions of national programs are representatives of the U. S. Departments of Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, and Health, Education and Welfare.

States invited to submit their programs for panel discussion include Montana, Michigan, New York and Florida.

(more)

Private organizations asked to discuss their programs include the National Wildlife Federation, the Federation of Women's Clubs, Izaak Walton League, National Parks Association, Chamber of Commerce, and AFL-CIO.

Invited to present collegiate programs for national resources professionals are the University of Colorado School of Mines, the MSU School of Forestry, the University of California School of Agriculture, and the University of Utah School of Wildlife Management.

Mattison said that a blanket invitation is extended to conservationists and educators to attend the conference and take part in panel discussions. A report of the conference will be distributed and specific recommendations will be made to appropriate groups, he added.

Dr. Gebhart said that, in addition to the conference sessions, field trips are planned to points of interest in the Missoula area.

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